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ARTIST-CLASSES.

WHAT, then, are the diseased operations to which the three classes of mankind are liable? Primarily two; affecting the two inferior classes:

1st. When either of these two classes despises the other. 2d. When either of these two classes envies the other; producing, therefore, four forms of dangerous error. First. When the men of facts despise design. This is the error of the common Dutch painters, of merely imitative painters of still life, flowers, &c., and other men who, having either the gift of accurate imitation or strong sympathies with Nature, suppose that all is done when the imitation is perfected or sympathy expressed. A large body of English landscapists come into this class, including most clever sketchers from Nature, who fancy to get a sky of true tone, and a gleam of sunshine or sweep of shower faithfully expressed, is all that can be required of Art. These men are generally themselves answerable to much of their deadness of feeling to the higher qualities of composition. They, probably, have not originally the high gifts of design, but they lose such powers as they originally possessed by despising, and refusing to study, the results of great power of design in others. Their knowledge, as far as it goes, being accurate, they are usually presumptuous and self-conceited, and gradually become incapable of admiring anything but what is like their own works. They see nothing in the works of great designers but the faults, and do harm almost incalculable in the European society of the present day by sneering at the compositions of the greatest men of the earlier ages, because they do not absolutely tally with their own ideas of "Nature." The second form of error is, when the men of design despise facts. All noble design must deal with facts to a certain extent, for there is no food for it but in Nature. The best colorist invents best by taking hints from natural colors; from birds, skies, or groups of figures. And if, in the delight of inventing fantastic colors and form, the truths of Nature are willfully neglected, the intellect becomes comparatively decrepit, and that state of Art results which we find among the Chinese. The great designers delighted in the facts of the human form, and became great in consequence; but the facts of lower Nature were disregarded by them, and their inferior ornament became, therefore, dead and valueless.

The third form of error is, when the men of facts envy design; that is to say, when, having only imitative powers, they refuse to employ those powers upon the visible world around them; but, having been taught that composition is the end of Art, strive to obtain the inventive powers which Nature has denied them, study nothing but the works of reputed designers, and perish in a fungous growth of plagiarism and laws of Art. Here was the great error of the beginning of this century; it is the error of the meanest kind of men that employ themselves in painting, and it is the most fatal of all, rendering those who fall into it utterly useless, incapable of helping the world with either truth or fancy, while, in all probability, they deceive it by base resemblances of both, until it hardly recognizes truth or fancy when they really exist. The fourth form of error is, when the men of design envy facts: that is to say, when the temptation of closely imitating Nature leads them to forget their own proper ornamental functions, and when they lose the power of the composition for the sake of graphic truth; as, for instance, in the hawthorn moulding so often spoken of round the porch of Bourges Cathedral, which, though very lovely, might, perhaps, as we say above, have been better, if the old builder, in his excessive desire to make it look like hawthorn, had not painted it green.

It is, however, carefully to be noted, that the two morbid conditions to which the men of facts are liable are much more dangerous and harmful than those to which the men of design are liable. The morbid state of men of design injures themselves only; that of the men of facts injures the whole world. The Chinese porcelain-painter is, indeed, not so great a man as he might be, but he does not want to break everything that is not porcelain: but the modern English fact-hunter, despising design, wants to destroy everything that does not agree with his own notions of truth, and becomes the most dangerous and despicable of iconoclasts, excited by egotism instead of religion. Again: the Bourges sculptor, painting his hawthorn green, did indeed somewhat hurt the effect of his own beautiful design, but did not prevent any one from loving hawthorn; but Sir George Beaumont, trying to make Constable paint grass brown instead of green, was setting himself between Constable and Nature, blinding the painter, and blaspheming the work of God.

Artists, considered as searchers after truth, are again to be divided into three great classes, a right, a left, and a centre. Those on the right perceive, and pursue, the good, and leave the evil: those in the centre, the greatest, perceive and pursue the good and evil together, the whole thing as it verily is; those on the left perceive and pursue the evil, and leave the good. The first class, I say, take the good and leave the evil. Out of whatever is presented to them, they gather what it has of grace, and life, and light, and holiness, and leave all, or at least as much as possible, of the rest undrawn. The faces of their figures express no evil passions; the skies of their landscapes are without storm; the prevalent character of their color is brightness, and of their chiaroscuro, fullness of light. The early Italian and Flemish painters, Angelico and Hemling, and Perugino, Francia, Raffaele in his best time, John Bellini, and our own Stothard, belong eminently to this class. The second, or greatest class, render all that they see in Nature unhesitatingly, with a kind of divine grasp and government of the whole, sympathizing with all the good, and yet confessing, permitting, and bringing good out of the evil also. Their subject is infinite as Nature—their color equally balanced between splendor and sadness, reaching occasionally the highest degrees of both—and their chiaroscuro equally balanced between light and shade. The principal men of this class are Michael Angelo, Leonardo, Giotto, Tintoret, and Turner. Raffaele in his second time, Titian, and Rubens, are transitional; the first inclining to the eclectic, and the last two to the impure class. Raffaele rarely giving all the evil, Titian and Rubens rarely all the good. The last class perceive and imitate evil only. They cannot draw the trunk of a tree without blasting and shattering it, nor a sky except covered with stormy clouds—they delight in the beggary and brutality of the human race; their color, for the most part, is subdued or lurid, and the greatest spaces of their pictures are occupied by darkness. Happily the examples of this class are seldom seen in perfection. Salvator Rosa and Caravaggio are the most characteristic: the other men belonging to it approach toward the central rank by impracticable gradations, as they perceive and represent more and more of good. But, Murillo, Zurbaran, Camillo-Proccaccini, Rembrandt, and Teniers, all belong naturally to the lower class.

Now observe, the three classes into which artists were previously divided: of men of fact, men of design, and men of both, are all of Divine institution; but of these latter three, the last is in no wise of Divine institution. It is entirely human, and the men who belong to it have sunk into it by their own faults. They are, so far forth, either useless or harmful men. It is, indeed, good that evil should be occa-

sionally represented, even in its worst forms, but never that it should be taken delight in; and the mighty men of the central class will always give us all that is needful of it; sometimes, as Hogarth did, dwelling upon it bitterly as satirists; but this with more effect, because they will neither exaggerate it, nor represent it mercilessly, and without the atoning points that all evil shows to a divinely guided glance, even at its deepest. So then, though the third class will always, I fear, in some measure exist, the two necessary classes are only the first two; and this is so far acknowledged by the general sense of men, that the basest class has been confounded with the second; and the painters have been divided commonly into two ranks, not known, I believe, throughout Europe by the names which they first received in Italy, "Puristi and Naturalisti." Since, however, in this existing state of things, the degraded or evil looking class, though less defined than that of the Puristi, is just as vast as it is indistinct, this division has done infinite dishonor to the great faithful painters of nature; and it has long been one of the objects I have had most at heart to show that, in reality, the Purists, in their sanctity, are less separated from these natural painters than the Sensualists in their foulness; and that the difference, though less discernible, is in reality greater, between the man who pursues evil for its own sake, and him who bears with it for the sake of truth, than between this latter and the man who will not endure it at all.

Let us, then, endeavor briefly to mark the real relations of these three vast ranks of men, whom I shall call, for convenience, in speaking of them, Purists, Naturalists, and Sensualists, not that these terms express their real characters, but I know no word, and cannot coin a convenient one, which would accurately express the opposite of Purist; and I keep the terms Purist and Naturalist, in order to comply, as far as possible, with the established usage of language on the Continent. Now, observe, in saying that nearly everything presented to us in Nature has mingling in it of good and evil, I do not mean that Nature is conceivably improvable, or that anything that God has made could be called evil, if we could see far enough into its uses, but that, with respect to immediate effects or appearances, it may be so, first as the hard rind or bitter kernel of a fruit may be an evil to the eater, though in the one is protection of the fruit, and in the other its continuance. The Purist, therefore, does not mind nature, but receives from nature and from God that which is good for him; while the Sensualist fills himself "with the husks that the swine did eat." The three classes may, therefore, be likened to men reaping wheat, of which the Purists take the fine flower, and the Sensualists the chaff and straw, but the Naturalists take all home, and make their cake of the one, and their couch of the other.—*Stones of Venice.*

SKETCHES OF JAMAICA.—Prominent among the trees that constitute a West Indian forest, stands the *silk-cotton* (*Bombax*), which has been aptly styled "a vegetable monster," on account of its immense size and distorted shape. Its white, shining trunk towers head and shoulders above most of its compeers, and sometimes measures nearly *fifty feet* in circumference; while the roots—at *their* junction with the main trunk—often stand several feet in height above the ground, forming large compartments, which the natives sometimes use (by turning a barrier across some distance from the tree) for pig pens. Its huge limbs—which are as large as the trunks of other trees—shoot out horizontally from the trunk to a great distance, and are covered with enormous *wens* or knots. The cotton is contained in large round balls, with which the tree is profusely adorned at certain seasons. It is

worthy of note that the tree is always perfectly leafless while the pods are on. The fibre of the cotton is soft and silky, but too short to be profitable for many purposes. Besides the tree is armed with long, sharp thorns, which render the gathering of it no easy matter.

The Royal Palm (*palmetto royal*) is said to be the most stately and elegant tree in the world. It grows to the height of 150 feet. The trunk is smooth and perfectly straight, and the top is crowned with a rich plume of feathery leaves, ten or twelve feet in length, and of the brightest green. They bend gracefully over in every direction, and in exact proportion, while from the centre rises a tall, green shoot (a new leaf in embryo) the top of which invariably inclines slightly to the east. At the base of the stems large pods shoot out, some two or three feet long, and tapering gradually to a point. These in a few weeks burst open and display large bunches of delicate, white blossoms. The centre of the crown affords a delicious vegetable, called "mountain cabbage," which is the more common name given the tree. It is the same that in Africa is called "palm cabbage." The only way to obtain a mess of "cabbage" is by cutting down the tree; and as it never sprouts, and is highly valued for its ornamental appearance, it is usually considered as "paying too dear for a whistle." The bread-fruit tree, which was introduced into the West Indies from the South Sea Islands, in 1793, grows luxuriantly, and attains the height of 50 or 60 feet. The bark is of a light ash color, pierced with small indentations, and covered with pointed warts. The limbs are few and large, extending almost horizontally from the trunk, and each branch has a tuft of large leaves at its extremity, in the midst of which the fruit is formed. The leaves are oval in shape, and from a foot to a foot and a-half in diameter, having deep scollops on the edges, dividing them into seven or nine lobes. The fruit is shaped somewhat like a pear, is of a bright green color, covered with hexagonal warts, and will measure eight or ten inches in length, and nearly a foot in circumference. Its naked trunk and limbs, when surmounted by a luxuriant growth of green leaves, and clusters of large pendulous fruit, present a very beautiful appearance. It produces two crops annually, and will furnish fruit during two-thirds of the year. It may be cooked either by boiling, roasting, or baking, although the latter two ways are considered preferable. It seems to occupy a position among edibles midway between vegetable and farinaceous products. It is more substantial than potatoes, and less nutritious than bread; and yet it is considered by many as preferable to either. It is propagated by separating one of the roots in the ground, and leaving it to sprout, and then transplanting the shoot.

Yams, cocoa, and sweet potatoes, are among their principal vegetables. They first grow in large hills, and are from a foot to three feet in length, and sometimes weigh 25 or 30 pounds each. They have a running vine, much like the Lima bean, only the leaves are larger, and have a smooth, glossy appearance. There are several varieties, as the "negro," "white," and "Affoo," and they are from 7 to 10 months in coming to maturity. They are usually planted so as to produce at all seasons of the year.

The *cocoa* grows much like a Russia turnip, only on a much larger scale. The stems of its leaves are as large as a man's arm, and they grow 8 or 10 feet high, are of a bluish color, and present a very thrifty appearance.

The *cho-cho* is a large, melon-shaped fruit, growing on a vine, and has a flavor similar to a squash.

The sago plant has a large bulbous root, often six inches in diameter, surmounted by a handsome bunch of pinnated leaves.

The *Gungo pea* grows on a tree 10 or 15 feet in height. It has beautiful red and orange-colored blossoms, and is nearly a year in coming

to maturity. It is not an annual, but bears for successive years. The fruit is smaller but sweeter than our English pea.

Nearly all kinds of tropical fruits grow in Jamaica in the greatest abundance and perfection. To give anything like a detailed description of them would require a moderate-sized volume. It may be a matter of interest to some, to learn the names of a few varieties. Besides oranges, lemons, limes, pine apples, and figs, there are citrons (growing on trees), shadocks, or "forbidden fruit," pomegranates, the sweet sop and sour sop, mamee and papaw, Jack fruit, akee, guava, cherimoya, &c. There are several varieties of apples, viz., the star, rose, custard, Otaheitan and cashew apples.

The *Jack fruit* is the largest variety found growing on trees. In size and shape it resembles a long watermelon. I have measured those that were upwards of two feet long, and still larger in circumference; they would weigh from 25 to 30 pounds. They grow from the trunk and large limbs of the tree, where the wind has little power over them. The color of the fruit is green; the outside is covered with little pointed protuberances, which give it a very curious appearance. The inside is soft and pulpy, and has an acid taste. A tree laden with such fruit presents a most novel and imposing sight to those unaccustomed to witness the wonderful developments of nature in a tropical climate. How true is it, that the world is full of wonders, and yet man is the greatest wonder of all the Creator's works.—A. M. R.—*Congregationalist*.

LORD WARD'S PICTURE GALLERY.—It is not generally known that Lord Ward's valuable collection of pictures, forming the Dudley Gallery, is still accessible to the public. It is as free as the National Gallery, and closed only on one day in the week—namely, Monday.

Unfortunately, in the absence of placards, finger-posts and advertisements, the benefits derivable from Lord Ward's liberality are almost entirely lost, for who, now hearing of the Egyptian Hall, Piccadilly, thinks of anything but Mr. Albert Smith and Mont Blanc? Yet in the same building, at the further end of the entrance gallery, is a collection of works of Art, fraught with instruction, and embracing specimens of an unusual variety of styles. During the memorable year 1851 it was eagerly visited among the many sights open at the time of the Great Exhibition, and it is the only one that has not since undergone some modification. Our readers may remember that, during the first season, we gave a detailed account of this gallery [see *Athenæum*, No. 1236], so that it will suffice on the present occasion to mention one or two of the prominent features by way of reminder.

The large picture by Raphael, inscribed with his name, and painted when he was only seventeen, is one of the chief celebrities. It came from the Fesch Collection, and was originally done for the Church at Città di Castello. The date attributed to it by Passavant is 1500. It displays the full influence of Pietro Perugino, and is, moreover, remarkable as the only representation by Raphael of the Crucifixion. The angels balancing in the air and the turn of the heads of the Madonna and St. John towards the spectator, contrast strongly with earlier representations of the subject, where the attention of every personage is absorbed by the central figure.

Next in importance may be named the beautiful picture of "The Last Judgment," by Angelico da Fiesole—a master who, although known to the public through the Arundel Society and foreign engravings, is not yet represented in our National Gallery. This painting is the finest of five repetitions of the subject, and remarkable as not having suffered from

cleaning or restoration. As a miniature, it is to be regretted that it is not hung so as to admit of a closer inspection. The Saviour appears in the centre as judge, surrounded by the Apostles and Patriarchs, with the Madonna on his right hand; and this figure may be termed a comparative failure. It is far inferior to the expressive Madonna in his press-door picture in the Belle Arte, at Florence. But the expression of the angels and of the beautiful Dominicans is almost unrivalled, even by himself. Happy in painting the blessings of heaven, Fiesole fails as signally in portraying the passions and torments of hell; but those who study this picture, making allowance for its worn condition, will derive no unfavorable idea of this pious monk as a colorist among the artists of his day. The yawning graves below, in the centre of the picture, like so many trap-doors, may at first startle those who are not accustomed to the conventionalities of the earlier painters. Fiesole has deviated from the ordinary representation of the subject:—the trumpets have sounded, the graves are empty, and the souls are finally arranged on the right and left. Most painters, from Giotto and Orcagna to Michael Angelo and Hemskerk, display all at the same moment the rising, the judgment, the reward and punishment—a tempting combination, indeed, for the display of anatomical knowledge and energy of expression. Another small picture, by Fra Angelico, affords one of the very best examples of his wonderful delicacy and intensity of expression.

A "Virgin and Child," by Filippo Lippi—the monk whose life was so great a contrast to the foregoing painter—exhibits wonderful knowledge of the Art, and perfect mastery in the modelling of the figure. Benozzo Gozzoli's "Virgin adoring the Child" is interesting, as showing the influence of his master, Fra Angelico, combined with some resemblance to Domenico Ghirlandajo.

A beautiful picture of the "Virgin and Child," surrounded by festoons and fruit, may be attributed to the early Paduan school of Squarcione. Nor is the old Venetian school unrepresented. A Gian Bellini head is there, although it has suffered much; but several large and well-preserved pictures by Crivelli deserve especial notice for technical excellence, in spite of defective composition, extravagant attitudes, and caricatured expression. One picture, inscribed "Opus Caroli Crivelli Veneti," is about the finest specimen of the master. A Francia, hanging between the Raphael and Fra Angelico, is especially fine; but this master is seen to great advantage in the National Gallery and at Hampton Court.

Lo Spagna, a very rare master in this country, is the author of six little full-length figures of Saints, attributed in the Gallery to Raphael. A "St. Catherine" is also probably by his hand.

A small "Last Supper" of the Giotto school, from the Bisenzio Collection, is full of characteristics, and reminds one of the composition still existing at Florence. Judas is placed alone on one side of the table in accordance with the traditional arrangement. Examples of Pesello, Peselli, Lorenzetti, Luigi d'Assisi, and Pinturicchio are to be seen—and the lover of the richer and more captivating styles of Art may behold the beautiful replica of the reading Magdalen at Dresden, to which the landscape background seems a foreign addition—and indulge his admiration for breadth and grandeur in the fresco handling of two colossal angel heads by Correggio. The academic style of Guido in the large picture of the "Death of Abel" contrasts singularly with many that surround it. It is triumphant only in execution. Poussin's "St. John Preaching" displays the effect of his attention to ancient sculpture, and the defect of his red color results from too close an imitation of the antique paintings known in his day. A

very fine Rembrandt of the same subject shows how variously the same theme may be treated, and how differently the spectator may be impressed.

The old German school affords several specimens; but a picture by Teniers representing Christ crowned with thorns is most singular as a sacred subject treated with profane homeliness. It exceeds the "Denial of St. Peter" now in the Louvre.

The collection contains landscapes by Cuypp, Ruysdael, Salvator Rosa, and Vernet—the latter a remarkably fine specimen of the master. There are some original drawings, a weak old copy of Raphael's beautiful Madonna and Child, still at Perugia, and known as the Staffa Madonna in the Casa Conestabile—also a series of Initial Letters from an illuminated MS., attributed by Dr. Waagen to Francesco dai Libri. They certainly cannot be by Mantegna, to whom they are assigned in the gallery. Several statues, including a repetition of Powers's "Greek Slave," and a mosaic of Da Vinci's "Last Supper," enrich the gallery—and it is much to be wished that Lord Ward would authorize some carefully prepared catalogues to be placed for the use and instruction of visitors. Many of his pictures that are in themselves really important are so uninviting at the first glance as to be lost to the generality, and it is this circumstance which renders some little assistance really desirable. On his lordship's return from his present expedition, we trust it may obtain his attention and consideration.—*Athenæum*.

EVERYTHING IN A GREAT NAME.—By F. LISZT.

—When I was very young, I often amused myself with playing school-boy tricks, of which my auditors never failed to become the dupes. I would play the same piece, at one time as of Beethoven; at another as of Czerny; and lastly as my own. The occasion on which I passed myself off as the author, I received both protection and encouragement: "it really was not bad for my age." The day I played it under the name of Czerny, I was not listened to; but when I played it as being the composition of Beethoven, I made dead certain of the "bravos" of the whole assembly. The name of Beethoven brings to my recollection another incident, which confirms my notions of the artistical capacity of the dilettanti. You know that for several years, the band of the Conservatorio have undertaken to present the public with his symphonies. Now his glory is consecrated; the most ignorant among the ignorant, shelter themselves behind his colossal name; and even envy herself, in her impotence, avails herself of it, as with a club, to crush all contemporary writers who appear to elevate themselves above their fellows. Wishing to carry out the idea of the Conservatorio (very imperfectly, for sufficient time was not allowed me), I this winter devoted several musical performances almost exclusively to the bringing forward of duets, trios, and quintets of Beethoven. I made sure of being wearisome; but I was also sure that no one dare say so. There were really brilliant displays of enthusiasm: one might have easily been deceived, and thought that the crowd were subjugated by the power of genius; but at one of the last performances, an inversion in the order of the programme completely put an end to this error. Without any explanation, a trio of Pixis was played in the place of one by Beethoven. The "bravos" were more numerous, more brilliant than ever; and when the trio of Beethoven took the place assigned to that of Pixis, it was found to be cold, mediocre, and even tiresome; so much so, indeed, that many made their escape, pronouncing that it was a piece of impertinence in Monsieur Pixis to presume to be listened to by an audience that had assembled to admire the master-pieces of the great man. I am far from inferring by what I have just related, that they were wrong in

applauding Pixis' trio; but even he himself could not but have received with a smile of pity the applause of a public capable of confounding two compositions and two styles so totally different; for, most assuredly, the persons who could fall into such a mistake, are wholly unfit to appreciate the real beauties in his works.—*Dwight's Journal of Music*.

JOHN CONSTABLE was born in England on the 11th June, 1776. His love for Art was manifested at an early age, and as usual it met with some discouragement from prudent parents. His father determined to make a miller of him, and placed him in a mill of his own, where he remained about a year, after which time, finding it useless to oppose Constable's inclinations, he consented that he should visit London and take his chances as a landscape painter. Constable studied in London by practising drawing and copying pictures, and finally settled down to a faithful study of Nature. Most of the subjects of his pictures are scenes of his native place and other localities to which he had become attached. His mill experience served him well, and he frequently gave its picturesque characteristics among the various pictures he painted. Constable struggled hard and long to acquire a reputation, and never perhaps was considered a popular painter. His style was new, and held to be an innovation upon "established principles"—in fact, in order to be appreciated, calling for an acquaintance with the Nature he painted, which those who loved Art by rule had no knowledge of. Constable possessed an independent spirit, he would not conciliate ignorance or pretention to gain money or a friend, he was studious in his habits, an excellent husband and father, and warmly attached to the few friends he possessed. There is little variety in his life; he never travelled abroad, passing the whole of his life in London and in various excursions about the country. His courtship is an interesting event for the lesson it furnishes to young people who are not afraid to marry—not to wait upon the selfishness of relatives who have more money than feeling, and more pride than common sense. Constable died suddenly in 1837, at the age of 61 years. His style was peculiar, and his own, and he may be justly called an ornament to the English school. He wrote but little about Art, although he lectured occasionally upon it. His letters, as put together in Leslie's Life, furnish a very entertaining and instructive book.

SCRAPS FROM W. COLLINS' DIARY.—I feel the necessity of looking at *generals*, as I conceive I have only arrived at the power of painting *particulars*. But, although I am not quite sure which I ought to have done first, yet I am inclined to think that, knowing what I do of *particulars*, I shall not make my *generals* too indefinite—and, in addition to this, I know more exactly what I want, as well as more how to value it when I get it.

Those who never particularize, are apt to build entirely upon their general knowledge (which, after all, is only a slight knowledge of particulars); and those who never look to the *generals*, are not aware of their consequence.

I think it necessary to get the outline of my figures completely determined, before I venture to paint them. Sometimes, when a part is well colored and decently painted, I am under the dreadful necessity of erasing it, because it is too small, or too large, or has some other defect in the drawing. The whole figure ought to be completely determined on, at the first, or second sitting; after which the parts may be successfully studied.

I must get the sparkle and vigor of objects in the sun; considering the distance at which most pictures are viewed, they ought to be painted very sharp.

I am now going to the academy, where, for some days, I shall be in the company of, and in

some measure on a footing with, the greatest painters in the country. To aim at surpassing them all; and, that my mind may never more be prevented from actual employment on this point, to discard all low and useless acquaintance with men, or things, not immediately connected with this aim.

To study in the country for future figures and groupings, with the accompanying backgrounds, and to make the most accurate painting and drawing studies of anything *in itself a subject*: sketches of *anything* I have too many. To be always looking for what constitutes the beauty of natural groups, and why they please in pictures.

In 1801, I began in the autumn to draw; although previous to this I had made some attempts, yet from this moment they were somewhat regular. Not long after this, I was instructed by a few lessons from T. Smith, to set a palette and begin to paint, which I continued to do with some degree of perseverance until, in 1805, I saw some necessity for drawing the figure. After much difficulty and fretting, I got into the Academy in the summer of 1806, where I passed my most happy moments, regularly attending that instructive and delightful place—the place where I dared to think for myself.

My great desire for improvement and my acquaintance with those who could benefit me as a painter, was at its height when and whilst I painted the fishing picture,* "Blowing Bubbles," and "Boys Bathing." This was in 1809 and 1810. The notice taken of the fishing picture also brought me acquainted with some persons, from whom, although I gained a great knowledge of the world, I profited little as a painter—as the pictures I then painted, although better, had less real study in them, and were produced *notwithstanding*, instead of *by the help* of the persons with whom I too frequently associated.

I had some heavenly moments when in company with my real and only friends, my pencil and palette.

Why should I be anything short of a fine painter? I will certainly, at any rate, have the consolation of *knowing* why. "Why I am not so at this moment—or, at least some of the causes why I am not so, are indolence (only habitual), and too much of what is termed the good fellow, by good fellows; but by hard-headed and sensible men, downright weakness."

CONSTABLE was of opinion that the best school of Art will always exist in that country where there are the best living artists, and not merely where there are the greatest number of works of the old masters. He did not admit that the French excel the best of the English artists in drawing, a point generally conceded to them; and in support of his own opinion he quoted that of Mr. Stothard, who said, "The French are very good *mathematical* draughtsmen, but life and motion are the essence of drawing, and their figures remind us too much of statues. In the slightest pen and ink sketches of Raphael, however irregular the proportions, you have the real principle of good drawing—his figures live and move."—*Life of Constable*.

CONSTABLE'S intercourse with "Antiquity Smith," as he was called, tended, no doubt, to strengthen that fondness for localities which had so much to do with, if indeed it was not the basis of his Art; and it may be inferred that the advice he received from his new friend was generally sound, from the following specimen: "Do not," said Smith, "set about inventing figures for a landscape taken from Nature; for you cannot remain an hour in any spot, however solitary, without the appearance of some living thing that will, in all probability, accord better with the scene and time of day than will any invention of your own."—*Life of Constable*.

* Entitled "Children Fishing."